

PATENT APPLICATION

**RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR §1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE
TECHNOLOGY CENTER ART UNIT 2853**

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Tsugio OKAMOTO et al.

Group Art Unit: 2853

Application No.: 10/667,497

Examiner: M. SHAH

Filed: September 23, 2003

Docket No.: 117273

For: BELT CONVEYING MECHANISM FOR INK-JET RECORDING APPARATUS AND
INK-JET RECORDING APPARATUS INCLUDING IT

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION UNDER 37 CFR §1.116

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In reply to the January 16, 2008 Office Action, reconsideration of the above-identified application is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks. Claims 1-24 are pending in this application.

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3-8 and 14-16 and the allowance of claims 20-24.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-2, 9-13 and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 2001-113690 to Mitsuhiro. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1, 9, 11 and 18 call for a recessed portion formed in the surface of the conveyor belt.

As admitted on page 2 of the Office Action, Mitsuhiro discloses holes formed in the conveyor belt (Drawing 3, holes 21a-1 to 21a-5). A hole is not the same as a recessed

portion. During examination, the Examiner must give claims their broadest reasonable interpretation in light of the specification (MPEP-2111.01 (I)). This means that the terms of the claims must be given their customary meaning unless that meaning would be inconsistent with the specification (MPEP-2111.01 (I)). The customary meaning of a claim term is the meaning that the term would have to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention *Phillips v. AWH Corp.*, 415 F.3d 1303, 1313, 75 USPQ2d 1321, 1326 (Fed. Cir. 2005). Given the customary meaning of "hole" and "recessed portion," one skilled in the art would clearly understand that they are not the same.

Additionally, independent claims 1 and 9 call for the ink retaining portion to be ranging from the bottom surface of the recessed portion to a rear surface of the conveyor belt.

The Office Action, on page 2, states that Mitsuhiro's Drawings 1 and 2 disclose absorbers 61A-64A that read on the above-mentioned feature. However, the absorbers 61A-64A are illustrated in Drawing 1 of Mitsuhiro to be under the conveyor belt and, thus, are not placed between the bottom surface of the recessed portion (alleged holes 21a-1 to 21a-5) and the rear surface of the conveyor belt.

Additionally, independent claims 11 and 18 call for a recessed portion formed in the surface of the conveyor belt such that the ink moves towards at least one width end portion of the conveyor belt.

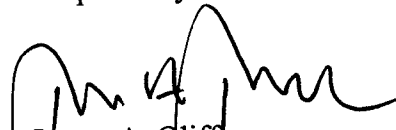
The Office Action, on page 4, states that Mitsuhiro's Drawings 1-4 disclose the above-mentioned feature. Applicants disagree. As discussed above, the Office Action equates the recessed portion with the holes 21a-1 to 21a-5, which simply allows ink to fall directly to absorbers 61A-64A. The holes 21a-1 to 21a-5 are not formed to move the ink towards one width end portion of the conveyor belt.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:RHR

Date: March 28, 2008

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